



## AMERICAN GAMING ASSOCIATION

April 17, 2014

The Honorable Gus Bilirakis  
United States House of Representatives  
2313 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington DC, 20515

The Honorable Peter Welch  
United States House of Representatives  
2303 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington DC, 20515

Dear Representatives Bilirakis and Welch,

On behalf of the members of the American Gaming Association, I write to express our endorsement of your legislation to strengthen our nation's ability to promote and market that international travelers visit the United States. AGA strongly supports the reauthorization the Travel Promotion Act and the good work of agency responsible for achieving this mission, Brand USA.

Overwhelmingly approved by Congress in 2010, the Travel Promotion Act, which created the public-private partnership Brand USA, helps our nation:

- Regain its share of the booming travel market, thereby enhancing U.S. economic growth;
- Spur American job creation – as international travel supports 1.2 million American jobs<sup>1</sup>; and
- Advance public diplomacy through better communication of U.S. security policies and clearly articulating that the U.S. welcomes international travelers.

Moreover, all of these benefits come at zero cost to American taxpayers, as the costs for Brand USA are underwritten jointly by private-sector contributions, which are matched by a \$10 fee incurred by visitors from Visa Waiver Program nations.

International business and leisure travel is critical to gaming communities across the U.S., as gaming serves is a popular activity among international visitors and as many of our nation's most attractive and desirable destinations are also home to casinos.

The fastest growing inbound travel market, Chinese identify "visiting casinos" as one of the top ten activities during a visit to the U.S. With the average Chinese traveler spending more than \$7,000 per visit, it's essential that we're marketing and promoting for these and other international visitors to spend their money here rather than the other emerging overseas gaming markets, which are located in closer proximity and – at times – easier places to visit than the U.S.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: U.S. Travel Association

Reauthorizing Brand USA to help market and promote gaming along with the myriad benefits of visiting the U.S. is critical to our economies continued success and global competitiveness.

Thank you for championing this legislation and working with Senators Klobuchar and Blunt toward a bipartisan, bicameral passage of the reauthorization of the Travel Promotion Act and, in turn, Brand USA.

We appreciate your leadership and stand along with our 332,000 strong gaming employees ready to assist your efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "G. Freeman".

Geoff Freeman  
President and CEO  
American Gaming Association